

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



10 January 2017

Mr Mark Hassack
Executive Principal
Outwood Academy Ormesby
Tothill Avenue
Netherfields
Middlesbrough
Cleveland
TS3 0RH

Dear Mr Hassack

Special measures monitoring inspection of Outwood Academy Ormesby

Following my visit with Ashley Wood, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 13 and 14 December 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the fifth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in March 2015. The full list of the areas for improvement that were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT), the chair of the academy council, the regional schools commissioner and the executive director for well-being, care and learning for Middlesbrough. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Nick Whittaker
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2015

- Rapidly improve students' behaviour in and out of the classroom and ensure that students always feel safe on site by:
 - frequently monitoring lessons to evaluate the extent and severity of disruption to learning and its impact on students and teachers and using the information obtained to provide support where it is most needed to bring good order to lessons
 - establishing a shared vision amongst staff of what is and what is not acceptable behaviour in the classroom, in corridors and around the school site
 - agreeing strategies to be used by all staff to develop better behaviour amongst students and monitoring the application of these rigorously to establish consistency across the school quickly
 - providing training for all staff in the management of students' behaviour, so that they all have the skills and expertise to respond appropriately to the challenges that students present, and establish high standards of behaviour in their classrooms, the corridors and outdoors
 - ensuring that students understand and follow agreed behaviour rules and any consequences for breaking them
 - developing mutual respect between students and teachers and between students
 - doing more to challenge bullying effectively.

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good, in order to improve students' achievement and accelerate their progress by:
 - assessing precisely where the greatest needs are and providing specific training programmes for these teachers
 - sharing the good practice that exists in the school and encouraging staff to learn from each other's successful strategies
 - raising teachers' expectations of what all groups of students, including boys and the most able, can achieve, including by providing them with opportunities to learn from good practice in academies with students with similar needs
 - developing teachers' expertise in planning for learning so that the significant gaps in students' reading, writing and mathematical skills can be reduced rapidly
 - providing effective training for teachers in their use of assessment so that they can plan effectively to meet students' different needs
 - rigorously monitoring the implementation of the school's new marking policy to ensure that teachers provide regular, clear and specific guidance to students on how to improve their work.

- Rapidly improve the quality of leadership and management, especially that of middle leaders, and of governance, by:
 - making sure that subject leaders are accountable for the progress that students make in their subject
 - ensuring that middle leaders monitor the work of their departments rigorously, acting upon any weaknesses as a matter of urgency by holding all members of the department to account for implementing the school's and departmental policies
 - ensuring that the school's recently introduced tracking systems provide accurate information for senior leaders and governors, so that staff can be held to account for the progress their students make
 - developing the role of pastoral leaders to include regular monitoring of behaviour, conduct and students' attitudes in lessons, so that the school has a continuous flow of information on these aspects and is able to take prompt action where it is needed
 - building on the good start made by the core group of governors to extend the knowledge, skills and expertise of all governors to hold the school to account, and to challenge and query reasons for the school's actions and students' performance.

Report on the fifth monitoring inspection on 13 to 14 December 2016

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive principal, associate principal, OGAT's regional chief executive for the north, senior and middle leaders and representatives from the academy council and academy trust board. Inspectors visited classrooms with senior leaders, spoke to pupils and looked at the work in their books.

Context

Since the last inspection, the principal has left the school and an executive principal has been appointed. The vice-principal has been appointed as the school's associate principal and two assistant principals have been appointed as vice-principals. In addition, a new assistant principal and two associate assistant principals have joined the school's senior leadership team.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The school's leadership has strengthened further since the last inspection. The executive principal, associate principal and team of senior leaders are an increasingly strong, cohesive and influential group. Together with middle leaders, they are making a demonstrable difference to the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.

Senior leaders have a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas needing further work. Although there has been improvement since the last inspection, they know that the quality of teaching in some subjects and across the curriculum remains too variable. Senior leaders know that this inconsistency results in too much variability in the progress pupils make. Importantly, senior leaders know exactly which aspects of teaching still need to improve and there is a strong and determined drive to tackle the remaining weaknesses and inconsistencies.

The leadership of pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare and the school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is increasingly effective. As a result, levels of attendance are increasing and the number of fixed-term exclusions is decreasing. Significantly, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making stronger progress as a result of better teaching and more effective support. Strong and purposeful leadership in English and mathematics is contributing to the improving trend in pupils' outcomes in these crucially important subjects. Although there has been improvement, leaders have not done enough to secure similar gains in science.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving. Pupils make fastest progress when teachers use assessment information to plan learning activities which secure and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a Year 11 mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher's clear explanation and effective questioning helped pupils to improve their understanding of how to use pie charts to present data. Pupils were challenged to identify the strengths and limitations of this method and, as a result, almost all deepened their understanding of this important aspect of mathematics.

The work in pupils' books shows that they learn well when they are given time to use and apply their knowledge and practise their skills. In a Year 7 history lesson, pupils could confidently describe how the Black Death spread to London. Pupils worked independently and collaboratively because the learning activity was interesting, motivating and, crucially, it gave them the help they needed to organise their thinking and writing. This is not, however, consistently the case. In science, for example, learning activities too often lack the structure and challenge needed to promote high levels of engagement and fast progress. As a result, pupils do not develop and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills consistently well.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make increasingly strong progress because their needs are identified and assessed well and they are skilfully helped by the teaching assistants who support them in lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

There is a sustained upward trend in levels of attendance. Although below the national average for secondary schools, overall attendance, including the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is improving quickly. Similarly, the school's monitoring information shows that incidents of disruptive or challenging behaviour and the number of fixed-term exclusions are decreasing. Increasingly, pupils understand and comply willingly with the school's high expectations for their conduct and behaviour.

Importantly, the work in pupils' books and their more active participation in lessons show that they are gaining in confidence and developing more positive attitudes to learning. The impact of these more positive attitudes on pupils' learning and progress in English and mathematics can be seen in their greater willingness to tackle challenging work and in their resilient use of the helpful feedback they are given by teachers.

Outcomes for pupils

Year 11 pupils achieved better outcomes in their GCSE examinations in 2016. Pupils made faster progress in English and mathematics and the proportion achieving a GCSE A* to C grade in both subjects increased from 39% in 2015 to 49% in 2016. However, the progress made by lower-attaining pupils and those who were disadvantaged was not as strong and rates of progress in science, languages and humanities subjects were much lower than those seen nationally.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making increasingly strong progress. Similarly, the most able pupils in Year 7 are developing their interest, confidence and skills in reading and, as a result, are also improving the standard of their writing. Importantly, however, the school's assessment information shows that the most able pupils are not making consistently strong progress in Years 7 to 11.

Current Year 11 pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are on-track to achieve better outcomes in English and mathematics in 2017. Again, the predicted GCSE outcomes for current Year 11 pupils in a wide range of other subjects are too variable. Although improving, pupils are not making fast enough progress in science, languages and humanities. More needs to be done to make sure that pupils do consistently well in a wide range of subjects and, as a result, leave the school fully prepared for the next stage of education, training or employment.

Senior leaders have developed a new system for checking whether key stage 3 pupils are working at the level expected for their age in all subjects. This is helping them to monitor how well pupils are doing with greater precision. Using this information to check whether pupils are, in fact, making strong progress from their different starting points is an urgent next step for senior leaders.

External support

High-quality external support is adding significantly to the drive for improvement at the school. Subject directors in English and mathematics, for example, are providing valuable additional support and challenge for middle leaders. More needs to be done to secure the fast improvement needed in science.

Senior leaders, including those with responsibility for the quality of teaching and pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, are increasingly effective as a result of similarly well-targeted help and support. This places the school in a strong position to tackle the remaining weaknesses and inconsistencies in the quality of education and outcomes for pupils.